



# SHORTHORNS EXCEL IN COMMERCIAL AND CROSSBREEDING PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SHORTHORN  
ASSOCIATION

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## SHORTHORNS FILL COMMERCIAL BILL

"At present we have a small commercial herd of whitefaces, with some Shorthorn-white-face crosses in it. The crosses seem to do so much better that I am going to phase out the whitefaces for Shorthorns."

-----Edward Watt, Elk, Wash.

The above testimonial is typical of the many we get in the American Shorthorn Ass'n office each week. It has become increasingly obvious that more and more cattlemen are taking a new look at the world's oldest beef breed with thoughts of increasing its superior genetic makeup in their commercial beef herds.

This new interest is well founded:

\* Shorthorns are the world's most numerous beef breed. Not in the U.S. where cattlemen are breed and color fadists but in countries where performance and profit are the sole determinors of whether a breed is used.

\* Shorthorns are the BEST for crossbreeding. Over 30 other recognized beef breeds owe part of their parentage to Shorthorn blood. No other breed, in fact, no other two breeds together, can match this crossbreeding success. Shorthorns "quality mark" their progeny while most other breeds merely "color mark" theirs.

\* Demand for commercial Shorthorn and crossbred Shorthorn females far exceeds existing supplies.

\* Demand for feeder calves and yearlings with Shorthorn blood also exceeds supply and, consequently, they are currently selling for a one or two cent per pound premium when offered for sale.

## SHORTHORN SUPERIORITY

Dr. Martin Nold, Gettysburg, S.D., talks about Shorthorn superiority with authority. As a young veterinarian, he "worked" approximately 10,000 calves of all breeds each fall. Anytime he was in a group of calves that looked like they had the quality and pounds to really give their owner a profitable return he saw "a group of red or brockle faced cows across the fence."

As an impartial observer he saw instance after instance where calves of Shorthorn blood were bigger and better. And, there, always were a lot of them indicating high calving percentage. Consequently, Dr. Nold was moved to start a Shorthorn herd which now ranks as one of the nation's best.

Dr. Nold is not a dreamy eye theorist. He has come to respect good cattle of all breeds and lives in an area where some of the best graze. He will tell you that the Shorthorn cow is the best mother. She milks the best "and", he says, "gives an adequate supply of milk for a longer period of time." She is an easy breeder, easy calver and a good forager. She is not plagued by prolapses, cancer eye, or



sunburned udders. She has a disposition second to none.

## THE FIVE "HOWS" OF PROFIT

Today the commercial producer is torn between using new, exotic breeds, or the older, more popular standby breeds. If he considers the five "hows" of profit, he will give more consideration to the use of Shorthorn-Polled Shorthorn bulls.

Let's take a look at the five "hows"

### HOW MANY?

How many calves are born alive?

How many reach weaning age?

In this category, Shorthorns excel. R.G. Wishard, Trail, Minn. reports that his Shorthorn crosses have averaged over 95 percent calf crops including calves from first-calf heifers.

Before considering exotics, the commercial producer should study research at the Meat Animal Research Center, Clay Center, Nebr. Their studies show that heifers mated to exotics have nearly twice the calving difficulty and death loss as when these females are bred to English breeds. Cows mated to exotics have nearly 700 percent more calf loss and calving difficulty than when mated to English breeds.

### HOW SOON?

Another profit determinor is how many cows settle that first heat period. The more early calves,

the more pounds of feeder calves sold in the fall.

Again Shorthorns "shine" in this aspect. Donahue & Rutledge, Cheyenne, Wyo., have used whiteface bulls, black bulls and Shorthorn bulls in their commercial operation. They report that with whiteface bulls they "spent six weeks doing nothing but greasing sunburned udders and calves' noses. Our weaning weights were unsatisfactory."

With black bulls they state, "we ran into shy breeding problems and had a long, drawn out calving period."

With Shorthorn bulls they found "a 50 to 75 lb. weaning weight advantage, a one to two cents premium per pound when marketed, and we had 70 percent of our calves the first three weeks of the calving period."

### HOW HEAVY?

Weaning weight is a profit advantage. With all breeds placing more emphasis on size, weaning weights are on the increase.

J.J. Hendrix, Hall, Mont., reports that "we increased our cow weights by 150 lbs. and our weaning weights by 60 lbs. since using Shorthorn bulls."

Burke Johnson, Crowheart, Wyo., reports that since using Shorthorn bulls in 1960 he has increased his weaning weights 20 percent. He states he also gets a quicker cycling and faster settling heifer with Shorthorn crosses.



## HOW GOOD?

Quality has been, is, and will be a prime factor affecting selling price and profits. Today there is a tendency to overlook quality in a quest for added size.

The feedlot operator will not be bidding on calves that will not be likely to finish out in a reasonable time at profitable weights and at the choice grade.

Packer acceptance determines, to a large extent, what the feedlot operator will buy. Many packers at the present time refuse to buy exotic crossbreds.

Willard Schlegel & Son, Culbertson, Nebr., perhaps the nation's largest feeders of Shorthorns and Shorthorn crossbreds, state, "We consistently top the market with our Shorthorn shipments and do it in less feeding time that we could with other breeds."

Orville Stangl, Java, S.D., states that his Shorthorn steers always go to market three to four weeks earlier than other breeds in his lot.

Shorthorns have an unsurpassed ability to grade low choice or better. A recent study in Texas concerning carcasses of show steers slaughtered at the 1972 San Antonio, Houston and Ft.

Worth shows indicates that fully 87 percent of the Shorthorns graded low choice or better as compared to 81 percent for Angus, 65 percent for Red Angus, 57.1 percent for Herefords, 51.6 percent for Charolais, 50 percent for Simmentals and 39.4 percent for Polled Herefords.

## HOW MUCH?

This means selling price determined by weight, quality and merchandising ability.

The Schlegels at Culbertson, Nebr., and the Ballentine Bros., Brule, Nebr., both report that each fall prices on Shorthorn feeders exceeds those of other breeds. Dayton Ballentine states, "we would feed more Shorthorns and Shorthorn crosses if they didn't cost so darn much more to buy."

Shorthorn and Shorthorn crosses certainly meet the "hows" of commercial profit. They present a great profit potential for those who raise them and those who feed them.

For more about this "profit" breed write:

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